

Dear House State Administration Committee:

Madame Chair and members, you will be hearing HB 30 today, which proposes to eliminate the same day registration in Montana that is now allowed by law and move it back to 5 p.m. on the Friday before election.

Section 3, Section 13-19-207 states that;

"An elector who registers pursuant to 13-2-304 on Election Day or on the day before the Election Day must receive the ballot and vote it all the election administrator's office."

This is what House Bill 30 if passed would take away from the Montana voter

Native Americans were denied the right to vote longer than any other community in the United States even though we are called the first people. Native Americans were granted the right to vote in 1924 but states were delegated with the voting procedures.

If you look at my report on protecting the Election Franchise for Montana's Native American Populations, you can read of how states have disenfranchised Native Americans for the last century but also you can see how resilient Native Americans have been in fighting for the basic right to vote. The Voting Rights Act of 1965, Section 2 states;

"No voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure, shall be imposed or applied by any State or political subdivision to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color".

In the 2012 Election, Native Americans registered over 6,300 new registered voters in Montana and had a recorded turnout on Native American Precincts of 61% turning out to vote. Late Registrations on General Election Day (November 6, 2012) accounted for 8053 total voters who utilized this option. 1160 were in Native American Counties, which accounted for 14% of total late registration voters. Without the late registration option these people would not have been allowed to vote.

Native Americans are Montanans and could also be called the first Montanans because of our ties to this wonderful country. Disfranchisement tactics have been used countless times from being residents of the reservation not of the state to not being considered civilized. We (referring to Native Americans) want to take part in our state and federal government, please don't allow Montana to take a step back from 45 years of progress in our state.

As a Native American Iraq Veteran, I fought for my your, mine, and the next generation's rights. Representatives I ask you to fight for my fellow Montanans and me.

Please vote NO on HB 30.